

6 MARCH 2001



Personnel

**SPOUSES TOGETHER AND READY (STAR)
PROGRAM**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

NOTICE: This publication is available digitally on the AFDPO WWW site at:
<http://www.e-publishing.af.mil>

OPR: 35 MSS/DPF (Major Robert J. Campbell) Certified by: 35 MSS/CC (Maj Cheryl L. Malone)
Pages: 2
Distribution: F

The STAR program is an optional 35th Fighter Wing program for unit commanders. STAR originated and is patterned after the US Navy Ombudsman program and was designed specifically for Misawa AB. It is designed to facilitate communication between families and squadron leadership, fostering a better understanding of families' needs and viewpoints while providing them information and an advocate who is also a civilian family member. The program is in addition to, not in place of, already existing resources and extensive command support.

1. Structure.

1.1. The overall operation of the STAR program is under the direction of the 35th Fighter Wing Commander.

The Family Support Center (FSC) Readiness NCO provides daily program guidance, administration, and ensures training.

1.2. Unit commanders who participate in the STAR program will appoint, in writing, sufficient STAR representation to support their unit and provide a copy of the appointment letter to the FSC Readiness NCO. FSC personnel are consultants to commanders in terms of appropriate selections. A STAR representative is directly responsible to their unit commander. A unit commander may appoint a unit STAR POC, normally the First Sergeant or Section Commander, to assist the unit's STAR(s) representative(s) in daily operations, information, and logistic support.

2. General Guidance.

2.1. STAR representatives are a vital link between unit commanders and family members. For the purpose of the STAR program, the term "family member" will include single personnel's significant others, mothers, fathers, and the children of single parents, as well as spouses and children of active duty military members. STAR representatives are not a "deployment only" resource. The STAR program is designed to improve communication between the commander and family members on a daily

basis. As a unit commander's representative, it is appropriate for them to be provided information covered under the Privacy Act for use in their duties. STAR representatives must be briefed in writing and sign an acknowledgment that they understand the safeguards and uses of any Privacy Act information issued. Additionally, as a commander's representative, they may attend meetings, which directly affect unit family members, such as the Community Action Information Board (CAIB) and the BX/Commissary advisory meeting. STAR representatives will not be used as unit social directors.

2.2. Each unit commander will assign specific duties and responsibilities to their STAR representatives. STAR representatives are scheduled for training with the FSC within 30 days of being selected. Unit commanders may provide resources to STAR representatives as their budgets allow. It is appropriate for units to provide a workplace, administrative supplies, access to computer support, printing support, e-mail address, answering machines, and a phone. It is inappropriate, and in some instances illegal, to provide dedicated equipment such as a private phone line, beeper or cell phones to STAR representatives for use in their residence. An answering machine dedicated to the STAR program may be issued to a STAR representative. When a STAR representative leaves/resigns or a unit commander changes, all information and supplies issued by the unit will be returned to the unit. The unit commander will then issue information and supplies to the new unit STAR representative as appropriate.

2.3. The FSC will provide STAR program guidance and continuity. The FSC will maintain a master list of all units using STAR representatives and a listing of all those individuals who have received STAR program training. A Commander/POC STAR familiarization briefing will be offered to units who may be interested in implementing a STAR program in their unit. STAR basic training is designed to familiarize the new STAR representative with their role and function. It is intended primarily for STAR representatives but Commanders, First Sergeants, Chief Master Sergeants, and Chaplains may attend. Basic training will focus on specific responsibilities such as treatment of Privacy Act Information, the STAR Program Code of Ethics, working relationships, confidentiality, publishing newsletters, sources of information and referral, and communication (oral and written). The FSC will also coordinate all ongoing training. The monthly ongoing training will be focused on current issues designed to provide program updates, guidance, a forum to look at lessons learned from other units, and a chance for STAR representatives to network with each other. Advanced training will be held as needed and will focus on specific topics of current concern.

LOYD S. UTTERBACK, Brigadier General, USAF
Commander